

Abstract

A communications network has data and dedicated control network communication links between nodes. The control network is automatically and reliably created by each node
5 determining each of its neighbour nodes to which it has a direct data link, each node having at least two neighbour nodes, and establishing a control network link for communicating control network traffic directly with each of these neighbour nodes. Each control network link can, if a
10 dedicated control network link is not available, use bandwidth of a data link between the respective nodes, a link selection protocol being based on shared risk link groups and available bandwidth.